

## AUSTRALIA PRESS PRAISES CARLSON Noted Handwriting Expert of Los Angeles is Subject of Editorial

"Truth", one of Australia's greatest newspapers, pays a high compliment to Mr. Milton Carlson, examiner and photographer of questioned documents, of Los Angeles.

Mr. Carlson's opinions as to disputed documents has been widely sought and his testimony is considered reliable and convincing. He is held in the highest esteem among those familiar with courts, and it is with pleasure that The Los Angeles Daily Journal observes the tribute which our antipodes write of him.

"Truth" has offices and publications in the leading cities of Australia and New Zealand. We quote the following from "Truth" of Melbourne, Australia:

### "SCIENTIFIC DETECTION."

"The Americans are a remarkable people for specializing in business and for striking off the beaten track in making new positions for themselves. There is, for instance, Mr. Milton Carlson, of Los Angeles, who figures in the American papers from time to time as an expert witness in important civil and criminal cases. Mr. Carlson styles himself 'an examiner of questioned documents.' This sounds like something out of a story by O. Henry; but it is a correct description of Mr. Carlson's unique business. He is an expert in fingerprints, handwriting, post-marks, and many other things which it is necessary to know in testing the genuineness of documents submitted to him.

"If, for instance, there is a doubt about the genuineness of a will (or even a doubt about the testator's capacity at the time he signed it), Milton Carlson is called as an expert witness; similarly in other cases turning on handwriting, fingerprints, post-marks, special qualities of paper, ink, etc.

"The latest American papers to hand give an account of a California case in which Carlson was called in to decide whether a set of 43 Hawaiian stamps, for which a dealer in rare stamps paid 65,000 dollars in cold cash, are genuine 'Hawaiian missionaries' (first issue, used by the American missionaries in Hawaii in 1851), or forgeries.

"Carlson is equipped with a battery of scientific instruments resembling those used by the 'scientific detective', Craig Kennedy, in Arthur Reeve's stories. Some months ago Carlson caused a sensation in America by proving that fingerprints could be forged. He showed how fingerprints taken from an innocent man (who might not be aware that they were being, or had been, taken) could be transferred to an incriminating document or object (for instance, the handle of a knife or revolver which had been used to commit a murder). This demonstration knocks the bottom out of the alleged infallibility of fingerprint evidence. Such evidence, when properly tested, is valuable as confirming direct evidence; but it can no longer be accepted as sufficient in itself. Not only can fingerprints be forged; but there is always a possibility of error in developing, photographing and comparing the prints; and here is where the 'examiner of questioned documents' can put in his fine work of scientific detection."

[Reprint from The Los Angeles Daily Journal, official paper of City and County of Los Angeles, Cal.—R. W. Gates, City Editor.]

## INDIA COMPLIMENTS AMERICAN EXPERT

### "Review", Published at Chunar, in Accord with Local Handwriting Expert

The "Review", published in the English language at Chunar, India, contains a very interesting article mentioning many other American and foreign publications, comments on the career of our distinguished handwriting expert, Mr. Milton Carlson of this city. Only recently The Los Angeles Daily Journal quoted from a very instructive article in "Truth", Melbourne, Australia, wherein the editor commented largely on Mr. Carlson's wide scope of activities in detecting and proving forgeries of handwriting, typewriting, postage stamps, wills and documents in general.

The "Review", of India, devotes much of its space to a review of Mr. Carlson's demonstration of the fact that fingerprints can be forged. While the Journal's readers may have been satisfied on the subject that fingerprints can be forged, it is nevertheless interesting to learn what other nations think of Mr. Carlson's startling proof, and that because of his expose that they are forgeable, actual forgeries of fingerprints have been unearthed.

The "Review", India, says in part: "For we are informed on good authority that the wily Kabull had been in the habit of forging fingerprints. It appears that during the course of the examination of a government expert in fingerprints, the pleader took a fingerprint of the expert himself and in the presence of the Court made such an exact copy of the same that the expert had to admit that they were both identical."

"It is somewhat amusing in India, to see experts on fingerprints examining and giving evidence as to the identity of impressions with the single aid of a simple magnifying glass. This, to say the least, is most imprudent, it should not be permitted." And, quoting from Mark Twain in Puddin' Head Wilson: "Because it is true that 'this human mark has no duplicate among the swarming millions of the earth' it requires the mastery of an expert to detect a forgery." Extended quotation from Alnsworth Mitchell's address before the Royal Society of Arts, London, on care of comparison of prints, is made. The English author of the new novel "The Red Thumb Mark," is quoted as having caught Mr. Carlson's version and says "Fingerprints are easier to forge than handwriting, and infinitely more secure." Various American publications are referred to, notably our contemporary, The Virginia Law Register, Charlottesville, Va., which is quoted as saying: "Milton Carlson of Los Angeles, nationally known expert on questioned documents, demonstrated to our entire satisfaction that fingerprints are forgeable." (V. L. R. 7 N. S. No. 5; 7 N. S. No. 11; 5 N. S. No. 10.)

The editor of the "Review" of India is thoroughly in accord with our Los Angeles expert for he further says: "Fingerprints are not as easy to identify as some persons imagine and Expert Carlson of America, who can be depended upon, clearly states that a fingerprint without a core or other fixed distinguishing point, cannot be identified, or at least done so with considerable risk." Details of Mr. Carlson's testimony at the famous Roscoe (Fatty) Arbuckle trial are reviewed. It will be remembered Mr. Carlson proved the purported fingerprints on the door to be fabrications, this being a sensational feature of that noted trial.

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